

The Curry Arts Journal
Spring 1975

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The purpose of the CURRY ARTS JOURNAL is to provide an outlet of creative expression for the students, faculty and eventually the alumni of Curry College. Poems, short stories, plays, essays, critiques, drawings, and photographs are welcome. It is to be published each year, hopefully for years to come.

EDITORS

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The editors would like to give their special thanks to Lucy Harvey and Dr. Kohak.

CONTRIBUTORS

POETRY

Elizabeth Bartis
William McGuire
Ronnie Horowitz
John Bergman
Lisa J. Buchanan
B.A.S.
Mary Di Nallo

SHORT STORIES

Madge Postal
Gladys Heitin
Anonymous
Sharon W. Kaya
R. Mandlovitz

The darkness torments me
This light tortures me
This world, it debates me
And these words, they pacify me

Elizabeth Bartis

CRUCIFIXION PIECE

The crucifixion of a plastic Judas came on the morning when Jesus missed the subway. The heretics were waiting in their seven fifty seats and were getting slightly restless.

The performance set for eight,
Was now twenty minutes late,
And poor Judas had the shakes,
So Jesus with his cool head had to try and
keep the peace.
MC Jesus cried aloud, "Welcome all you sinners,
saints, and snakes,
I hope this little parody is not to much
to take."
And the drumrolls played, the trumpets crashed,
and the spotlight blasted down,
And Judas was now dragged on stage by forty
thousand clowns.
He kicked, and screamed, and cursed them out,
and tried to break away,
But each and every one with sticky hands
had to make him stay.
They built a cross of bamboo shoots and stopped
in silent stare,
For Jesus, who was down stage left, had
something to declare.
"Well Judas it's strange to see you here in
this my old position,
A twist of fate, a backward scene, and now
to fulfil my mission."
"I had to do what I must do.", said Judas
to his captors,
The heretics were drama nuts and all broke
into laughter.
They set the cross in center stage with
masking tape and nails,
And Judas was attached to it with the sharpened
shells of snails.

The clowns began a chorus then demanding
his contrition,
The fools kept on for hours 'til was time
for intermission.
And backstage was a party for the producers
and the cast,
But not to much was eaten due to holy Thursday's
fast.
The show resumed in full array to show poor
Judas beaten,
And Jesus thanked the audience for all their
kind attention.
The curtain closed, the lights went down,
the crowds went separate ways,
The Times, the Post, and Herald too, had
little more to say
Then that it was a fine performance, though the
plot was rather thin
And closed with the moral question,
"Who commits the greater sin?"

Wm. McGuire

A CRYSTAL LATTICE

I feel like I am trapped in a
 crystal lattice
Sparkling glitter feeds my confusion
I am a breathing contortion in a
 labyrinth of dismay
My home is this diamond--
 a crystalline trap
I dream in sparkles
And live in reflections
I try to contend with the
 snowflakes of differences
The stimuli of sparkles
 which look like rainbows in the sun
The beauty of this trap
 is the horror of my mind--
 the crystal lattice.

Ronnie Horowitz

Mrs. Kasner

A whistle came from behind her; some construction worker was offering an opinion. She was used to whistles and head turning and had long since learned to ignore them as forms of flattery. She felt extremely independent today and her confidence added a special glow to her physical appearance.

She stopped in front of the Saks Fifth Avenue window studying the latest styles in women's wear. "Must go in and take a look when I've got the time", she thought. She then gave a big smile noticing her appearance in the window; she was quite beautiful. Her figure was still as trim as when she had been in college. "Pretty good for a woman of forty" she thought.

She had on a stylish red ribbed shirt with a long blue skirt and a chain belt hung around her waist. Her face showed no sign of aging. Her cheeks were soft and clear with only a bit of make-up to aid in their glow.

She glanced at her watch. She was late; so she waved a taxi over. "Fifty-Seventh Street, Diamond District", she said.

As she sat staring through the window, her thoughts wondered. The kids were home from school now; the maid was preparing dinner.

Her daughter was beginning to worry her a bit. The kid didn't seem to be trying very hard in school and her clothes were in such bad taste. "Jeans and torn shirts; it must be a stage", she thought.

The taxi stopped and her eyes blinked to the present. He was waiting for her in the office.

"Hello, Mrs. Kasner", the secretary said. "How nice you look today."

"Thank you, Esther, and where is Mr. Kasner?" she asked.

MRS. KASNER

"Right here." He was standing at the door to the office. His eyes were shining following her every movement. Her walk so confident and independent. She sat and his eyes caught her legs; they were so smooth and tempting.

"How is my little pussy today?" Before she had no time to answer, he spoke. "We've no time to sit; I have to show you off", he said.

They got into the elevator. "Good evening Mr. Kasner", said the attendant.

"Hi Jimmy. Have you ever met my daughter?" Jimmy's eyes widened. "How do you do?" he said.

The restaurant had a beautiful interior. Its rooms filled with made-up ladies and men who sat observing ladies other than their own.

They sat down and he ordered two gin and tonics. "So", he said "Did you do alot of shopping?"

"Yes, well just a dress", she said. "Also I sent out invitations to the party."

"How many?", he asked.

"About fifty. We'll also need some hired help. I'll call Gladys in the morning.

"Fine. You handle it. I cant stand these things. Wish there was another way to pay people back", he said.

They drank in silence. "How was your day?", she asked.

"Nothing worth discussing. Matters you wouldn't understand, so let's not worry your head about them."

She nodded. The rest of the meal they ate in silence, her only asking for a refill on her drink every so often.

Driving home to the island she put on the radio-- Debussy's "Afternoon of a Faun".

She began to hum softly, her eyes almost closing.

He clicked it off. "Honey, you know that stuff puts me to sleep; better nothing".

They arrived home about one thiry. She got ready for bed in the bathroom. He was already asleep when she came into the room, a National Geographic spread across his chest.

Downstairs in the kitchen she sat in her daughter's old highchair, a glass of wine in her hand. Lately there was trouble getting to sleep and the alcohol seemed to soothe her. For a long time she sat staring; her eyes changed, now hollow and empty. Then she spoke through her eyes, tears falling down her cheeks. She sat in the kitchen a long time crying and then went back upstairs.

Madge Postal

OF DREAMS and DEEDS is ADMIRATION FASHIONED

Her name was Rachel.

The first time we met she was attending a seminar for graduate students at Brandeis. It was at a luncheon hosted by the Brandeis Women's Club; and Rachel sat at our table, an intense, earthy, wide-eyed Israeli in peasant attire, her head proudly, almost haughtily, held somewhat to a side, strongly projecting the Sabra air of independence and individuality. Yes, she said, she taught at her kibbutz. Her kibbutz had been in existence about thirty years and her parents had been among its founders. Communal life was not for everyone, she replied to one inquiry. It was a way of life for her, however. Anyway, she added, shrugging her shoulders, within an easy hour she could be in Tel Aviv, in Haifa, in Jerusalem and have her fill of whatever. . . . What of the political strife, she was asked. There must be peace in the Middle East. "How can there be peace in the world if there is not peace in Jerusalem?" Her statement, so matter-of-factly spoken, reflected keen insight. Then she went on:

"It's a matter of survival for us. Really, really now. We cannot afford war. That should be simple to understand." Rachel paused, momentarily contemplative. Then she revealed, "I'm a pacifist myself. An oddity for an Israeli? Not as much as you would assume. Anyway, I am. If everyone in the Middle East would rid himself of hostility and suspicion, a lasting peace could be achieved." She drew in a quick deep breath. "There are probably many ways this can be done. One way is to integrate our schools and that's where I come in. I'm going to work in Haifa setting up just such a new school." Although she had begun perfunctorily, she was now speaking with rapid-fire speed, almost stumbling over her words. Whereas at the beginning of the luncheon she had appeared somewhat de-

tached, she now was totally involved. I found myself hypnotized, nodding in agreement without fully digesting all her words. She appeared consumed by her own zeal as she talked and talked and talked of her love for the land, her commitment to the young children, her sense of fulfillment.

Too soon the luncheon was over, but I had to know Rachel better and so invited her to my home. Thus began six weeks of listening to Rachel, watching Rachel, getting caught up with Rachel. Here was a young woman, I concluded, who knew who she was, where she stood, and what her goals were.

The second time we met, five years later, I was a tourist in Israel. As usually happens after the first flush of correspondence, Rachel and I communicated less and less till we had almost lost track of each other. When I knew I was going to be in Israel for an extended time, however, I wrote to her and in reply received an invitation to attend the Purim Festival at her kibbutz. I was to stay at the home of her parents.

It was while we were watching a Purim pageant that Rachel's mother began to talk about her daughter, in response, of course, to some prodding from me. "Yes, Rachel still teaches at the kibbutz, but most of her energy goes to the new school in Haifa where, do you know? would you believe? almost one hundred Arab children are enrolled! We have about one hundred and fifty Israeli children enrolled also. The experiment seems to be working," she added. "Children, living apart from their parents, growing up together, studying together, playing together, even fighting and making-up, learn to accept each other as people. That's what my Rachel wants," her mother said, "for people to accept each other as people!"

Suddenly I saw Rachel in the Purim dance, her peasant body completely at home in its peas-

ant surroundings, swirling in carefree abandon to a Yemenite rhythm, her long hair flowing after her, spontaneous, frivolous, the antithesis of her ghetto progenitor.

When the pageant was over, Rachel and I found each other and embraced. "How do you like our Israel? A wonderful country, a beautiful country, yes? Ah, so young, so exciting, so full of vitality! So much we have to do!"

Again, as during that luncheon at Brandeis so long ago, I found myself nodding in agreement, repeating, "Yes, yes, it's everything you say and more, more!"

Rachel kept right on, animated, exuberant. "Such building . . . almost too much building . . . new cities where yesterday there were sand dunes or desert . . . and the new schools! Oh, you must come to Haifa to see my school. You must come tomorrow -- tonight!" Though her face had smudges of make-up, though her hair was in complete disarray, though her blouse was only partially buttoned and her feet bare and muddy, Rachel was resplendent and radiant. Israel was the dynamic force in her life, giving it depth and dimension, providing the emotional stimulus and drive which enabled her to dedicate herself completely to "the dream and the deed" as envisioned by Theodor Herzl generations earlier.

"Of course, I'll visit your school in Haifa," I replied when I could reply, "but the visit will have to wait till I return from my week in Safad."

"Ah, Safad," she murmured. "Safad is our city of mysticism. You will like it. It is one of my favorite places." I urged her to come with me, but she could not, explaining that in two days she would be leaving for her weekend with her "chaver," loosely translated "lover." He was originally of her kibbutz, but had volunteered to help build a border kibbutz just south of Eilat. Some day, in about a year or so, this

would be her kibbutz, too. It was part of her master plan to build a network of new schools and what area had a better claim to such a school?

The third time we met, a year and a half ago, Rachel was back in the States on a fund-raising hop. "Everything is coming along just fine," she told me with her usual confidence and optimism. Did I know that she had been named administrator of the new school in her chaver's kibbutz? Yes, she had been--as well as asked to serve as a consultant to a board of education considering the establishment of an integrated middle school in Jerusalem. And she and her chaver were to be married in December. A real kibbutz wedding. Would I come?

On October 10th, in 1974, shells and bombs and torrents of gunfire splintered to infinity a tiny border kibbutz, just south of Eilat, shattering make-shift homes, newly cultivated fields, two schools, and the dreams and hopes and passions of a young woman I had grown to admire for her individuality, her independence, her idealism and the intensity with which she lived.

Gladys Heitin

Mother, Brother, Sister, Lord

Oh mother, dear mother, my great mother love,
just what is this sadness I must endure?
Where should I go and what should I do
to find the satisfactory cure?

Oh brother, good brother, my strong brother sun,
Is it you who'll heed my heartfelt prayer?
Can you decipher what mankind's done,
and does anybody seem to care?

Oh sister, please sister, oh sweet sister moon,
I'm lost in a wilderland of fear--
I'm longing for a change of tune,
I ask "Will happiness soon be here?"

Oh Lord, my Lord, The Lord of wonder--
You've made me come to see a light,
I thought my life was torn asunder,
I thank you for making it much more bright.

John Bergman

Il pleut

Il pleut
Je l'entends sur mon toit
Le vent
Souffle tout doux parfois
Il parle
En haut dans les sapins
Dehors
La pluie tombe au jardin
Le chat
S'en dort auprès du feu
Bien chaud
Qui saute et danse un peu.

C. J. Buchanan

The night came
every day,
I knew it was
I felt it's darkness beating
as hard as the sun's slow voice
as dry as a dead mouth
That died of talking and pleading with the fact
of the diminishing touch
of the diminishing hand
and the death of feeling

Elizabeth Bartis

The darkness convinces
The treachery of the night
Of the person who was, but never came
 and the night becomes full of
 empty spaces
 and empty thoughts
 of nothingness
and empty dreams come to fill the spaces
 dreams of fullness
 to put me to sleep
 alone with the darkness
 of nothingness
Dreams of dancing, being clothed by the beach
Dreams of laughter, flickering a candle
Dreams of a meaning
Dreams of a life
Dreams of a fool
 Who understood love
 but was burned and drowned
 and fell into
nothingness and darkness
 alone

Elisabeth Bartis

IT RAINED HARD ON JIMMY

I remember Jimmy and I remember the day also. It was cold, raining and it was March. Jimmy asked me something that day which didn't seem too unusual.

The cold that day was significant because it created an erie atmosphere. The cold pressed to my bones and something warm would have seemed unusual. It made me ache and feel empty. I think Jimmy felt empty also when he asked me to leave school with him.

We attended a private boarding school and we had to get permission to leave. Jimmy never tried to get permission because he didn't have anywhere to go. The school would not have let him leave so it was not strange for him or any other student to run away when not allowed to go legally. There were only about eighty students going to school that year. The eighty included second grade through high school. Jimmy and I were in eleventh grade. All of us used to tease each other about being emotionally disturbed. That was why we were there. It was a therapeutical boarding school. It was made up of a farm and a lot of rundown buildings and trailers, and acres and acres of land, mountains and lakes. The rain brought out the shabbiness of the buildings and it brought out the emptiness I felt I was made up of.

I told Jimmy I didn't think I could leave with him and then I left him. I walked away quickly because I couldn't think about running away. Running away from school wouldn't accomplish much. It was more efficient for me to remain there and not be there then to leave. It was more natural for me to run into myself and lose myself there. The pain would always hide me. The dull thickening feeling inside me increased as I walked away from Jimmy. It could hardly be called emptiness anymore. I needed to be alone as soon as I could; I needed to try and reach down my throat to where it was strangling me; I needed to pull it out.

It was Friday and when I left Jimmy, I got into the car with the other girls and our guardian, who would take us back to the house. We didn't live on the school grounds with the boys.

Some of us may have been more disturbed than others of us, but we were all there for basically the same reason. Some of us may have been more frightened, more unhappy or more unable to cope. Most of us knew how to pretend though, and how to play at acceptable behavior. Jimmy couldn't; his reason was only more obvious than the rest of ours. I couldn't understand him but I tried to be nice to him. I knew we had something essential in common. It was the same thing every other person who went there felt they shared with each other. It was our secret; you could read it in our smiles. It was the secret of being socially unacceptable and it contained the reason to why we were so.

Mostly everyone at school didn't like Jimmy regardless of secrets. They might have been afraid of him because Jimmy represented us at an extreme. He looked weird and frequently lost control of himself and acted out. He moved around with almost spastic motions and tried to talk to people about things that didn't seem to make sense. He was alive and it seemed as though everyone held it against him. I didn't blame Jimmy for leaving school and I didn't blame what happened.

I had been having a bad week and back at the house, I cried myself out to the darkness of my room and the coldness of the pain. The pain looked funny Friday night. It twisted into odd shapes and moved passed my eyes as though it were floating in water. I tried to grab it; I tried to bite it. I tried to test its reality by cutting my arm with a razor; I saw my blood and knew it was real. I started screaming because I was frightened. Then--a blue capsule and water--I thought it was the pain's water; I thought it would kill me; I choked on it. The

pill swallowed--I begged someone to kill me; the water had failed.

I fell asleep soon after and had a dream I would never forget. I had a nightmare in which I was a duck and it was hunting season. The hunters scared me because I was afraid of their guns. Their guns were large. I tried to get away from them by leaving the pond and hiding in the grasses. The grasses were tall and I laid low. Then, locations changed and I was in a parking lot. I was in my normal form and not a duck anymore. There was a stage in front of the cars which were parked as they would be in a drive-in movie theatre. There were people in the cars. These people had the guns. They were shooting at the stage. On the stage were other people who were running around acting as moving targets. It was a fine sport with ambulances stationed nearby. The ambulances were taking the wounded people to hospitals. I was hiding behind the cars watching it happen. I was so frightened I had trouble breathing. I was frightened because of the assured feeling that I should be up on the stage. I was frightened because I already felt like I was on the stage. My anxiety overcame me and I awoke.

As I already knew, Thorazine was a potent drug. It dulled my senses and dulled my anxiety; but it slowed me down and made me tired. Before I came to school, I was taking it three times a day. I could never understand why my psychiatrist thought I should take tranquilizers. I was almost always tired before I went on medication; it just made me more so. My tranquillity was approaching apathy. I had been taking anti-depressants also. Anti-depressants were the first type of medication I was put on. I had to take four of them a day along with two tranquilizers at night. I wanted those pills to work so much. I wanted them to make the horrible feeling go away. I wanted to stop suffocating; I wanted the pills to help me breathe. The

doctor said they wouldn't work until I had been taking them for two weeks. Two years passed and I got to hate taking all those pills. I didn't know what I felt anymore. I told the doctor they didn't do anything. He put me on Thorazine during the day and sedatives at night. I told the doctor they didn't do anything. He put me back on another type of anti-depressant. I was taking it when I began going to this school. Nothing happened and after a couple of months, I decided I didn't want to take any more medication. So I stopped taking the pills. After a day, I started feeling sick. My metabolism speeded up. Two nights passed with no sleep. Sleep was my relief; I felt tortured. I got sick in the morning, sick at school in the afternoon, sick back at the house, sick after sick after sick. I felt hot; I felt cold. I thought I was dying. My guardians called a doctor. He asked me about the pills. He told me to take three of them. I took three and within an hour I felt relief and fell asleep. Eventually, I was able to stop taking them. After I did, I only took something when I couldn't fall asleep and at times like last night. I didn't mind taking something at those times because with the pill came my only relief. If I didn't fall asleep, it seemed like I had. I was so worn out from screaming last night that I fell asleep soon after I swallowed the pill. But I only slept for five hours.

When I awoke, my eyes were swollen and they were sore. My arm ached from the razor cuts but I scratched it with my nails so it would hurt more; my arm began to bleed and I found the comfort of my pain. My mouth was very dry and I went downstairs to get something to drink. One of the girls was at the table eating breakfast. She asked me how I felt; I told her I felt the way I looked. She told me I should change my clothes because I had them on since yesterday. I told her it didn't matter if I wore the same

thing yesterday because my clothes weren't essential to my being. And then I told her I wasn't going to take off the clothes I had on for the next two weeks. She asked me if I would sleep in them every night. I said of course and asked her what difference it made. She said they were dirty. I told her they would get clean when I took my showers because I wouldn't take them off then either. She asked me how I felt. I told her I felt painful. She asked me about the Thorazine. I said it didn't matter; I needed it to sleep. She told me they gave Thorazine to the severely psychotic at a mental institution she had read about. I told her it didn't matter; I needed it to sleep. She said I was screaming loudly last night. I told her I felt painful last night. She said I scared her; then she asked me if I would get some Thorazine for her. I told her she was an idiot and went upstairs to get changed.

It was Saturday and on Saturdays we went shopping for food. I liked going to the supermarket because it reminded me of life before the pain arrived and dragged me away from things like supermarkets and the people in them.

When my guardian saw me at the top of the stairway, she came over and hugged me. She said I'd look pretty if I would comb my hair. I told her I felt ugly and was afraid to look in the mirror. I told her it wouldn't make any difference if I combed my hair or not. Then I said no one could really see me anyway and I started crying again. She hugged me tightly and kept saying now, now, now and there, there, there. I sobbed asking when, when, when because it couldn't be now. I sobbed asking where, where, where because I had already looked there and had found nothing.

It was still raining when we left the house. I like the rain when it's not cold. But it was cold and it intensified my pain because my pain

was cold and coldness hurt. As I walked from the car and to the car when we were shopping, I imagined each drop of rain was a needle falling into my face and hands. I didn't need to look to know the wetness I felt was my blood.

When we returned to the house, I helped unpack the food and went upstairs to do some homework. I looked at my books; they laughed at me and asked me why. I remembered going to public high school before I came here. I did so well in school and then one day I couldn't read anymore. I remembered trying to study for a biology exam; I couldn't understand my own notes. All my words looked upside down and backwards. I remembered crying that night and I remembered getting an A on the exam anyway. A couple of weeks after that I couldn't take tests anymore. I would stare at the paper on my desk for the whole hour. Then I would hand it back without answering a single question. My trigonometry teacher had questioned me. I was the only student who had gotten an A in her class the semester before. She asked me if there was something I didn't understand. She didn't say anything when I didn't answer. There was too much I didn't understand. Frustration had sunk in.

My books stopped laughing. After all, how funny could it be. I brought them to my bed. On the top was a copy of a book about the school. I'd read it before but I opened it again. It repeated the words emotionally disturbed and exceptionally bright into my ears and into my eyes. I thought it amusingly ironic to be bright and disturbed. If someone was really bright, I thought they should be too smart to be disturbed. Something must have gone wrong inside of Jimmy and the rest of us. It seemed we had all lost something somewhere along time. It didn't matter how bright any of us were if we were unable to function. People who fade away don't offer much.

I started crying. I cried because the pain

was in my tears. I tried to make the pain leave by crying hard but softly. I didn't want anyone to hear me. I didn't want to become clouded up in Thorazine. There was too much to feel; the cloudiness would have choked me.

Saturday night, Sunday, many weekends tucked themselves away like this one. They offered no hints about the future. I tucked myself away into each day called forth only the strong realities that touched me.

Classes were called off on Monday because there was going to be a search for Jimmy. He'd left on Friday. Everyone thought he had gone for a walk and gotten lost. Jimmy couldn't have gotten lost. He already was lost before he left. If anything, I thought he would find himself on this walk. Being lost may seem like an infinite state especially when you have never been anywhere that you weren't lost. But it is also finite because after a while there isn't any place else to go. Jimmy could not get lost because he really had no where else to be lost. I remembered him asking me to run away with him. I hoped he would find what he was looking for. Maybe he would find his way back or maybe he would find some place where he would not be lost. But I couldn't think of any reason why he would ever try to find his way back here. He would always be lost here.

It was still raining on Monday. It still hurt me. We walked down paths, around lakes, around trees, through trees looking for Jimmy, a long gone apparition. I thought of him as a ghost because he threatened my reality. His existence questioned my own. The rain held echoes vibrating you are, you are, alive, alive. In my ears vibrating why, why, why are you. I knew we wouldn't find him. I thought it was absurd to look for him. He'd been gone almost three days. He had run away. He wouldn't be around here. I hoped he would show everyone and get somewhere safely. I couldn't think of any

place he would go though. I didn't think he had anywhere. I wondered what he thought. I wondered if he knew.

We walked far down one path. It was dark outside; it was muddy and wet. I felt cloudy. I thought something would appear and envelop me in it. I thought I would be enveloped in nothingness. I thought I would drown in the mud. I thought I would melt into drops of rain. I felt like I was raining on Jimmy.

Tuesday came and helicopters flew over the school grounds and scuba divers looked in the lakes. Now I thought, they were looking for a dead boy. But what they were looking for didn't mean they knew what they would find. A solitary boy was obvious. I knew they could never recognize emotions. That's what they should have looked for a long time ago. It's much harder to find someone who's been lost for years than to find something that's been lost for three days. When someone's been lost for years, sometimes you can't recognize them when they come around. If you don't recognize them, you go on thinking they are still lost. When people treat you like you're lost, you usually lose.

The rain was colder on Tuesday. The heat wasn't working but I hung on to the radiator anyway. I wanted desperately to become warm; I wanted to see the sun. It became my dream that month; the sun would heal me. The sun can only bring back to life those who are at least partially alive. It does nothing to help those who are already dead. I never knew anyone who had died but death composed an extremely large part of my world. I thought about it; I dreamt about it; I compared it to life and found it enticing. I wished for death more than frequently, thinking I might drop dead one day just from wishing for it so hard. I daydreamed about death. I played with scenes in my mind of suicide. I was always alone dying slowly. When I went for walks by myself, I saw myself running in front

of cars. I saw the cars heading into me. I could feel impulses, drives towards death. I had to make an effort not to do it. As each car passed me, so did an urge to run out into the street in front of the car giving it no time at all to stop short. But I realized there was a stronger urge inside myself creating a resistance to death. At times I was obsessed with thoughts of suicide but I never attempted it. There was one time I made a pact with myself that I would never attempt suicide; I would commit it. But I never even tried to make a decision regarding suicide. I never felt that I would do it. Death would have to come for me because I would not look for it. If there were impulses towards death in me, there were greater ones in favor of life. I judged that only by the fact that I was still alive.

I know most people have wished at times that they were dead. But the strongest fight people would ever put up would probably be against death. I know when I've felt happy, the thought of death would scare me. Somehow I've thought, that death would come to me when I was glad to be living. It would come because of the other times, actually the majority of times when I begged for it. The thought of death scared me because if it did come, I didn't know if I should or would give up the chance. Even if I was happy, I didn't know if I would be satisfied with rejection. I didn't know which would gratify me more; I didn't know if pain could be worse or not. My emotions must have been in favor of continuing with life because I cried for almost two hours when they told me Tuesday night that Jimmy was found dead.

They had found what they were looking for. They had been looking for a dead body as if a dead body meant anything. If they had known what to find or what to look for, maybe they would have found him. A farmer who lived a few miles away from school had found Jimmy's body

on his land. He was found lying beneath a window of the farmer's barn with his shoes off and one sock in his hand. I couldn't think of what he had been trying to do. He didn't have a coat on. He had on a sweatshirt. They said he froze to death. I understood that because I knew the cold and I knew how it hurt.

I wondered why things hurt only certain people so much. I wondered why everything always hurt me and hardly anything made me happy. Where was all this pain coming from? Why did it kill Jimmy and why did it hurt me so much? I didn't understand the specific aspects of sensitivity. I only knew I hated it and wished I could be numb or dead. I thought it hard to be a person. People bleed too easily. But all people bleed; it's just that some people never stop bleeding. I felt like I was suffering from emotional hemophilia. That was when I decided that people who are as hard as rocks are really not so. They are as soft as mud and will be splattered by rain. They try to clump themselves together instead of spreading out in an effort to create hardness that will refract the rain. Hardness is not a denial of emotion; it is a reaction to pain.

An English teacher wrote a poem for Jimmy; and the school planted a tree. I didn't think the poem was very good but the tree reminded me of Jimmy. It was fragile but it grew through the rest of the term and looked quite sturdy by the time I graduated. I thought of it as superficial faith.

Jimmy symbolized for me the most delicate and important part of man. His fragility was his innocence and his innocence was all that was not a lie. Lies are destructive. They destroy trust and create pain. Pain is a lie because it is destructive. It destroys beauty and beauty can be found almost anywhere so its destruction is widespread. Fragility is vulnerable; it has to be because that is what it means. Lies are

made to do everything but profit fragility. They either destroy or hide it. Jimmy was destroyed because he was vulnerable. His death made me feel weak and compassionate. I saw everyone as frail and delicate. I felt tremendous love and pity for mankind. And then I realized that they were all still living and I recognized a strength involved. A strength I would have to make grow in myself if I didn't want to continue dying. Jimmy froze to death; and I knew that it was more than his body freezing that killed him. The cold got to Jimmy's soul because for some people the pain is just too great; and I didn't want to be one of those people. I decided there was a reason I wanted to be warm so badly. The reason was because of how it felt; and I knew spring was less than two weeks away and it didn't rain on Wednesday.

Anonymous

I don't see
anymore
I cry
but
I can't see the tears
anymore

The stain still wet
the pain still deep
The tears never wash away all thats done
the tears never dry

2

Now the days go slow and every night is another
death
and everyone who used to be was begotten by a
son

who latter dies in war

and

I keep on talking
till the tears run dry
I'll keep on talking
till I die

Elizabeth Bartis

the bird died
It's in the trash can now
The cat went away hungry
he cried
At least someone cried

Elizabeth Bartis

Come with me to touch the stars
if only to find we can't; they are too far
Come with me to catch the wind
if only to have it slip away again
Come with me to race the sun
if only to watch it set when the evening comes
Come with me to learn to fly
if only to be swept away by the sky
Come with me to the rainbow's end
if only to find there's none and come home
again.

L. J. Buchanan

I am
As I am
Now
Never before
Never again
Always the same
Changing

L.J. Buchanan

SAINT PATRICK and THE EARTH MOTHER

It was one of those inspirational days, the kind that asks questions and requires no rote answers. I passed faces smiling hello and searched into the crystals of melting snow for conversation. My eyes whispered softly for my green eyed lover-today was his domain.

It was Saint Patrick's day, as Irish a day as his face; for he was too Irish, too Catholic, and much to appealing to me. We made love. It came gradually. We broke every rule installed by our differed pasts. We broke our togetherness when we lost our identities.

Our love was as my pose. I sat upon a park bench, alone, Indian style. The sun beat warm upon my back. The cold wind brushed my face with speed. The chills in my chest made me think again of cuddled mornings and a motherly care developed in me for his constant hang-overs, coughs, and lack of domestic ability.

It was the mornings I had held on to him for. He could never understand this. For him it was the nights, getting higher than he could smoke to, thrusting a passion he wanted to deny, and once finally exhausted he would sleep. I'm not saying it never satisfied me, there were good nights. But for me, it was the mornings.

Some would say that it is because I am a teacher. I enjoy the innocence of a new day. It is mine for the changing. And of course they call to my sign, Aquarius, free as a windy morn. It was all of these, and for me it was also my fame. You see, I am a prophetess.

I live this dream that I am the mother of two children conceived by a force no man could install. They live in the field of Israel that bears my name, and their names are Jonas and Michael. Never to be born to view pessimistically a world that killed their father in hate, and denies their mother a hold, they just sing praise like David. Yes, they sing praise for todays when no one need wear green.

When they were born they were as dark as the late Martin Luther King, then they inherited a mansion of wealth from a senile general, then they woke up on morning with shinning green eyes. Their eyes still smile every day I walk into class, but his have burned in a reckless passion, they are blurry and gray. Before they would inspire songs, now they require a last act. It fits much more a winter than the spring, but death is unpredictable.

That is what I've always said. You see, I am to die soon. Six years to be exact, but sometimes I think I'll live longer, in fact I already have. At twenty-one, a widow, a mother, and a lover of countless men and women, I've lived thirty years. My knowledge and studies are as old as Aristotle and as young as a Piagetian child grasping and grasping. I've even died.

It was in a Church. I watched the needle and the pain of a scared track upon my arm. There school green walls melted on my breast and the stained glass windows broke under my feet. I was to hang there on the cross but his cousin cried no.

His cousin, my sister, she saved me. But of course, it was me who saved her. In her amnesia to being frightened, she blew a song in my direction. I will call her the Jewess for in time she will not refuse the title.

I was here leader, always one step ahead of her. I would confess the evil I was knitted to so she would not have to be so involved. She would listen, she still does. She is a virgin who makes love with an open hand. The blood stained sheets I also lived for her. That way she won't have to know. You see, I have taught her well for she is the guardian of my children.

For the Jewess it is not only that. I share with her a life time of relaxing nights, listening to her pluck folk songs on the guitar. I sing. Jasper sings too. Jasper is her bird. he could have come from Woolworth's but he is really from the fields. I like the nights with the Jewess and Jasper, but really its the mornings.

I wake up early in the Jewess' garden. Jasper sings as I fix my breakfast and wash the dishes left over from the previous night. I fold the blankets, and sign my name in the guest book. Its always different but always the same - "Shalom". I never say goodbye, I've learned better.

It's good to wake up to Jasper, he is green; as the spring plants my children pick fruits from. They all pick fruits, and I provide them. You see, my eyes are the greenest of them all.

Sharon W. Kaye

OF THREE I SING

Let me preface this essay by stating that hero-worshipping never has been my style. If, however, I were to select the one person who, more than any other, embodied those qualities I hold to be essential to a hero--courage, enthusiasm, integrity, a concern for his fellow-man, a sense of commitment, charisma--then, without a doubt, it would be old Jake.

Let me tell you about Jake.

Jake stood tall, appeared broad and when he would smile, revealed teeth which were slightly off-white in color, but teeth which were straight and strong and striking. One of the oft-told stories about Jake described how, when he was in his prime, he could rip the cap off a soda bottle with his incredibly strong teeth!

Jake came to this country ill-equipped to cope with the environment he found. He came alone; his entire family remained in a small east European "shtetl." He was only fifteen years of age when he arrived. He came without a trade; what skills he had acquired were totally useless in the sophisticated, highly mechanized industrial city where he found himself. Communication was difficult; his elementary schooling had been in a language other than English. To compound matters, he arrived on Ellis Island with the equivalent of \$10.00 in his pocket.

Jake, though, came to this country as a highly motivated, idealistic young man eager to immerse himself in "learning." With only menial work available to him, and a twelve hour work day to contend with, Jake began his education the only way he knew. He purchased the largest dictionary he could find and systematically began to memorize its entire content! Thirty years later, Jake would entertain us by imitating how he had mispronounced the words he had only seen, never heard. Jake's struggle with the language

was synonymous with his struggle for survival. But Jake had guts and stamina and determination. He acquired an amazing vocabulary, an adeptness with words and a flair for writing. He mastered a new craft, gained a measure of security and found the warmth of family.

Jake bought his first book with fifty cents of the first \$3.00 he earned. And he kept right on buying books until his household boasted the grandest library in the neighborhood. Jake not only read his books thoroughly, but also possessed the unique faculty of total recall. Whenever challenged, he would go to the exact book, turn to the right page and say, "There it is. . . ."

Jake's need for friends during his first years in America led him to chess; and an instant love affair started, a love affair, I might add, which lasted throughout his lifetime. Thursday night tournaments at his home became a ritual. Watching Jake in action on any of his Thursday nights was watching all the facets of his personality come into play. Opposite the prodigious player, Jake would assume the arrogance of a man out to win. With the novice he would be gentle and patient, explaining new moves, illustrating an "impossible check-mate." With the young child he would be inventive and imaginative. Jake always gave himself a handicap whenever he played opposite anyone he considered less proficient in the science of the game. The first time Jake played opposite me using all his men on the chess board marked a victory for me. I knew I had achieved advanced standing.

Jake elected to identify with the working people because he felt comfortable with them, had an affinity for them, and was proud to be of the "working class." He enjoyed the drama of union politics, could tell a story with the best of them, could down his whiskey with an air of camaraderie and sing out, in his melodic bari-

tone voice, all the labor songs he had learned. Since he could articulate better than most of his co-workers, he became their spokesman. Then he became their union representative. Later on, he was accorded the singular honor of being asked to serve on the Executive Board. But Jake always served on the volunteer level. Though opportunity must have presented itself many times, Jake never compromised his principles in order to advance himself economically. That was not his way.

Jake could become sentimental about music, almost any music. Most of all though, Jake could become sentimental about his music, the folk songs which were a poignant reminder of his past, a symbol of his cultural pluralism. These songs he insisted his children learn.

Jake was a man "bigger than life" in his own personal accomplishments and certainly "bigger than life" in the heritage he left his family. If today his grandnephew holds the title of National High School Chess Champion, it is a tribute to old Jake. If today his children and grandchildren love books, read books and collect books, it is because of the example set by old Jake. If today his family is concerned about social welfare and civil rights and human rights and include among their heroes such men as Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy, Cesar Chaves and Ralph Nader, it is because old Jake exposed them to his heroes: Eugene Debs, Thoreau, Samuel Gompers, Jack London, Norman Thomas and F.D.R.

They don't make them like old Jake anymore. And that's too bad. For old Jake was a special kind of hero to his family. I should know. He was my Father.

Gladys Heitin

To Papa

as i knell
beside the grave
of trodden
flowers and grass
i brush the dust
from the gravestone
and i sit to
remember when
the flowers were full
and the grass was green
and i sit
to realize
the futility
of crying over a
trodden grave
for i knew
it was a grave
from the beginning;
i had read the gravestone
but i deceived myself
by looking only
at the flowers and grass
and by turning them into
the garden i had always dreamed of.
but no garden
is a grave
and no grave
(no matter how fine)
is a garden
i know all
but i will never
learn,
for even as tears
fall,
i think of them
not as the tide
sent in to wash away
the remains
but as the gentle rain
that must fall
if my garden is to grow.

B.A. S.

EXQUISITE LOVE

A VIGNETTE UPON REFLECTING HOW I HURT SOMEONE -
MARCH 20, 1975

Last night I dreamed I was back in French Quebec. The still cold and the gloss on the snow made me sure I was near the brown house in Rodin. But the dream cheated me because it didn't bring me Jessica. Any dream that doesn't bring Jessica cheats me. But then, today, looking out the bus window blurred with dirt and rain I let my eyes go starey-blank and Jessica came into my soul. Full blast. My mother always said she did her best thinking on buses-- maybe I do my best loving on them.

Jessica is full everything. When I broke really wide-open because she always held it right out in front with all of it working. Of course when hearts like that get broken it's a profound and unhealable break. And that is undoubtedly why she prays so much now in the Ashram in California. She still wants to live but it's extremely tough with a really broken heart. It must take lots of beads and mantras to Babaji to keep living. I've heard lots of people in my life say: "You win a few, you lost a few" but I could say about knowing and losing Jess: You win a lot, you lose everything.

Towards the end of the bus ride I could see the delicate brown hairs of her hairline just above her brow and her elegant nose and the olive-skinned satin of her cheeks but her eyes were hidden from me. Somewhere along the ride I started to grieve with little guttural sounds in my throat - yearning sounds. I loved Jessica once and she loved me and I think she wouldn't believe that I'd give up all the lovers she hated and the clothes I bought and the house I live in and much, much else to see her for one hour. She wouldn't believe either that the rau-

cous causticness of me - those terribly, aggressive, rough edges of me - hurt someone just about her age today and that the guilt dug into me so much that I remembered until I took a sleeping pill at night how awful I had hurt her. That I'd slashed someone she would believe but that I realized it she wouldn't.

This letter I've written to her dozens of times but never sent. It usually says:

Dear Jess:

You tried too hard for everything - for me, especially. If you tried that hard for me, what was there left of you to crack open when you did? Or did you close up as the only way to hold together? Were you really an agate goddess - all strength and smooth beauty? You must have been or you would have been destroyed much, much earlier. Because you were with me more than fifteen years. This letter is probably like you remember me - talking, talking. I talked so much that at the end you wouldn't listen at all when I finally got down to the love part. I loved you. I love you.

Is there still a part of you that responds to beautiful words? You had such pride, such valid pride. You were a proud, exquisite girl. Will you let me tell some people about the summer we had in Spain or the one on Fire Island or the many, many ones on Martha's Vineyard? Can I tell them you got the evenest, the best, the most exquisite tan of anyone - that you played the piano with great delicacy - romantic Chopin - and then danced Gypsy Flamenco with all the intensity of you coming out in the straight, straight back and the staccato steps that almost pounded the floor through? If I tell them about that they should know about the back of your neck where the hairs come up perfectly to wind into a graceful twist of glossy, soft brown. Just where your hair pulled up at the back of your neck was so vulnerable! As a baby nursing,

you must have felt how many times I ran my hands over and over the exquisite softness down there and over the little hairs that grew up so perfectly. When I see you dance in my mind your eyes come back - they shine - baby chipmunk eyes I called them - your Hungarian-Jewish grandmother looked at them with tears and said she saw her mother's - sloe eyes from a ghetto somewhere. I think I gave you nothing physically but I think I gave you a heart that could break. It takes one to know one. Please, please let me tell them about the last time I saw you in the Air-India terminal at Kennedy Airport. It was last April - the cruelest month, I agree, T. S. - last year that someone told me you were coming through New York on your way to New Delhi. I ran up the stairs and you and hundreds of people were in the waiting room. And God did a beautiful thing for me - he let me see you for the first time in three years from the back of your neck - my loving spot, your softest, most vulnerable place. You were dressed in a white cotton sari but even from the back you were just like I remembered. It's wrong to write of a neck like a column but oh, my God, if anyone could see yours it wouldn't be trite. I sat down three benches away and watched the back of your head on your perfect, motionless neck, a praying neck, a grown-up neck, a baby neck. I looked at you this way for almost a half an hour out of the hour I might have with you with luck. I poured out into that room all the love you were never sure of and willed and willed it to enter your soul through that most vulnerable spot where I'd held you at least ten times a day for the first two years after you were born and from where through all the years we were together I would lift up your hair a few times almost every day - every day, I'm sure - so to kiss the soft underneath.

When I moved up to only one bench away I had to use discipline I didn't like to keep from

screaming but I did use it. Right after that all discipline went because I got up and kissed that dear, dear spot and you went rigid because you knew it was me. When you turned your face around it was perfectly lovely and taut and full of hate. Only one thing contradicted your face and gave you away. You knew your privacy was invaded again because I noticed you were wearing the emerald earrings I'd given you at sixteen and it's forbidden to wear color when you pray so I knew you loved me still. You wanted me with you after all. You started talking to me in a very disciplined, controlled way. You couldn't give me your heart if you'd wanted because I'd blasted it to shreds years ago. Mine was still there, though, because Life has been good to me except for losing you. Mine entered full-blast into holding you and laughing and talking and kissing. Your face was beautiful - honestly perfect. No other person in that room commanded more attention than you when you stood up and tried to walk away from me. For a small girl in New York that is an exquisite achievement - to have a whole room watch your walk. It is. I don't believe in complexes and psychological probing anymore, Jess - where you're concerned it's my guts and my soul spilling. I'll take out the word guts because you'd hate that. You love, above all, beauty. My soul splits for you, Jess. I don't cry very often but my soul is a serene chapel of agony. Jesky-Pesky puddin' pie - hate your mother but she won't cry.

Two months later when you wrote to your father about how my excesses had chilled you again I didn't cry. In a very nice way others probably wouldn't understand, you wrote in your exquisite handwriting with great care for aesthetics and understatement and accuracy that I had drooled into your ear three times that day - three times when trying to kiss you. Well, the old Yiddish saying is that there's humor in

every situation but that really isn't humor to you and me. It's hate from you to me and pathetic of me because I cannot learn to love you correctly - as you want. But - I love you. The great supply of excesses of emotion and words that clubbed our relationship to death doesn't help me when I'm alone and I am alone. Often I hate Hemingway for being so ascetic and sparse with words and emotions in his writing. If I'd had his style in real life we wouldn't be apart.

R. Mendlovitz

The Promise of the Fall

Now is a time of flight
Everything is moving
Away
Nothing is permanent
All is as it should be.

It is a flight in peace
A letting go
Free
Not torn away
But knowing the time has come.

Now is a time for leaving
A little while
Rest
Not for ever
But only till spring shall come.

Mary DiNallo